WILLIAM BRADFORD HOMER DOWSE

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William Bradford Homer Dowse

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A Memoir

By William Vail Kellen

B10
Dowse, W.

Boston
Privately Printed
1929

One hundred and fifty copies printed by
D. B. Updike, The Merrymount Press,
Boston, September, 1929

A MEMOIR

WILLIAM BRADFORD HOMER DOWSE, the first member and the second benefactor of the Massachusetts Historical Society of that name and family, died in Boston on April 19, 1928.

He was of English descent, on his father's side, from Lawrence Dowse, born in Legbourne, Lincolnshire, in 1613, who sailed from Boston, England, for Boston, Massachusetts, about 1630; on his mother's side, from John Alden of the Mayflower Company. In 1649 Lawrence Dowse moved over to Charlestown, where he and his sturdy descendants continued to live and thrive until the American Revolution.

Eleazer Dowse, in the fourth generation from Lawrence Dowse, a well-to-do tanner and leather-dresser, with a comfortable home on Main Street in Charlestown, fought with two of his sons beside

him — the younger, Joseph, only fifteen years of age — in the Battle of Bunker Hill. Returning home from that memorable fight, he saw his house and plant go up in flames when the British fired the village. Thereupon, with his second wife, Mehitable, and the remaining children of his two marriages, he fled up the Charles River and thence overland, first to Holliston, seeking a favorable spot in which to settle, and then to Sherborn, as affording a more plentiful supply of bark; and in that town bought a homestead and began again the leather business. From that time the interests of the town of Sherborn and of the Dowse family were closely intertwined, if not identical.

Thomas, the youngest of Eleazer's children, who was to become the "greatest benefactor" of the Massachusetts Historical Society, as well as one of the earliest of American philanthropists, was a man of strikingly individual character.

He was born on December 28, 1772, and was therefore but two and a half years old at the time of the Battle of Bunker Hill and the Charlestown fire. Whether the tragic events of that day unconsciously affected him, or the crippling due to a later fall from a tree and an ensuing illness, he never married and led, outside business interests and a few friends, a singularly solitary life. After getting what little schooling was to be had in Sherborn, he learned the trade of leather-dressing and worked until he became of age in his father's shop. He early showed a fondness for books and every shilling he could save went in their purchase. All his leisure was spent in reading, and before he was eighteen years old, he had read every book he could get at in Sherborn. With his freedom suit, he went to Boston and worked there at the bench at his trade for ten years for wages varying from twelve dollars to twenty-five

dollars a month. Then starting in business for himself, he made by dint of will and a superior product a considerable fortune. As he prospered, he built a commodious mansion in Cambridgeport with ample grounds about it, added to his fast growing library all the books he craved, and the more to enjoy reading them retired from business at seventy. Literally by a turn of Fortune's wheel, he added to his store of books a superb collection of water colors, copied from the old Masters, of whose works "at that time, neither copies nor engravings had often reached this country," much less, as they have in numbers since, any of the originals. A lottery was set up in London to further the sale of engravings of these water colors, which latter in two groups formed the first and second prizes, and a set of the engravings, colored, the third. Thomas Dowse bought three tickets, drew all three prizes, and hung the pictures in his home

for the enjoyment of himself and his few friends. For the rest of his life and until his death at eighty-four, besides the companionship of books and pictures, he passed his time contentedly, as weather and seasons served, in strolling "among his flower-beds, listening to the hum of his bees, whom he would not allow to be robbed of their honey, superintending the planting of his shrubbery and pruning his trees."

His entire library formed a fine and unusual collection of books to the number of five thousand or more, embodying the best editions of standard authors, mostly in English, many of them rare, all of them finely bound, reflecting the judgment and good taste of the collector. On July 30, 1856, when in his eighty-fourth year, he gave the library, which it had been his joy and his pride to collect, outright to the Massachusetts Historical Society, as evidenced by the delivery by

him to Robert C. Winthrop, its President, of one of his choicest items, *Purchas his Pilgrims*. The library, with rare good sense, was allowed by the Society to remain in the Donor's possession until after his death, when it was, with a gift from his Estate of $10,000 for the care of it and of $3,000 for installing it, placed in the existing and later in the present building of the Society. The noble room devoted to it shares with the library the name of "Dowse," and the books, though freely accessible for use, cannot be taken from that room. Mr. Winthrop, in a tribute before the members at a meeting of the Society, and Edward Everett, at a public meeting of the citizens of Boston, each declared him to be the Society's "greatest benefactor."

Thomas Dowse during his lifetime erected, solely at his own expense, a stately obelisk at Mount Auburn to the memory of Benjamin Franklin, whom he

greatly admired as a fellow worker with his hands, with kindred tastes, and by whose striving for self-culture he had been greatly cheered. By his will Thomas Dowse, after providing for relatives and making a few minor bequests, gave a handsome residue to his executors to be devoted to charitable, literary or scientific uses, which trust was fulfilled with "signal good judgment and discretion," a part of such residue being devoted to the founding of the "Dowse High School" in the town of Sherborn.

Joseph Dowse, the lad of fifteen, who was in the battle of Bunker Hill with his father, Eleazer, after helping as best he could to settle the family in Sherborn, entered the revolutionary army and served throughout the war. Returning to Sherborn at the close of the war, he married, joined the Pilgrim Church, of which he became a deacon, settled down at Dowse's Corner, and there followed

the family business of leather-dressing. Benjamin, the eldest son of Joseph, married Thankful Chamberlain, both becoming members of the Pilgrim Church, and lived for some years happily and prosperously pursuing the leather business on the homestead of his Grandfather Eleazer in Sherborn.

Edmund Dowse, the eldest son of Benjamin and Thankful, born September 17, 1813, and the father of William Bradford Homer Dowse, was the first "Dowse" to break away from the family trade and to seek an education to enable him to enter the ministry. Beginning with the near-by district school, he went thence to the "Old Wrentham Academy," and then to Amherst College, whence he graduated in the Class of 1836. He then went back to his father's house in Sherborn, in which town he was to spend his long and useful life, and at once began to serve the town, while pursuing his theological studies, as

a member of the School Committee. Two years later, after marrying his first wife, he was called to the Pilgrim Church in Sherborn, where he was baptized and which he had joined in his youth. On October 10, 1838, he was ordained as its pastor, in the presence of his Grandfather Joseph and of his parents, Benjamin and Thankful. Thus began a ministry of sixty-seven years, the longest but one among the long pastorates of New England, and successful and harmonious to the end. In 1881, Amherst College conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Rev. Dr. Dowse was almost or quite the last of that type of the New England minister which Harvard College was founded to perpetuate, and who was the servant of Church and State alike. He was the guide, philosopher and friend of every denizen of the town as of every member of his parish, young and old; and his influence and his activities extended

to the neighboring towns as well. He represented church members and townspeople alike in secular as well as religious matters. He advised the entire community, he encouraged the downcast, he ministered to the sick. His attendance was as essential as that of the surgeon at the performance of a major operation. He married and he buried three generations of parishioners. He served as a Chaplain of the Christian Commission in the field during the Civil War. He represented the district, of which Sherborn was a part, in the State Senate in 1869 and 1870, and was the revered Chaplain of that body during the last twenty-five years of his life. During his long ministry he superintended the public school system of the town and kept it abreast of the times; and it was largely through his efforts that the "Dowse High School" was established from funds out of the estate of his great-uncle, Thomas Dowse.

He married for his second wife, Elizabeth Bowditch, the ninth of the seventeen children of Galen and Sarah (Davenport) Bowditch, a lineal descendant of John Alden, who came over in the Mayflower.

William Bradford Homer Dowse, the youngest of the four children of this marriage, and the only boy in the group, was born in the parsonage at Sherborn on February 29 of the Leap Year of 1852. This striking name was given the boy by his father, in remembrance of his room-mate and class-mate at Amherst, William Bradford Homer. He was the valedictorian of the class and became a minister, but what promised to be a brilliant career was cut short early in his first pastorate. Young Bradford grew up a sturdy, active, imaginative and independent boy. With few, if any, boys to play with, he had to rely on his own resources for amusement and employment, and those resources never failed him. The characteristics of initia-

tive, independence, masterfulness and self-assurance distinguished him through life. He did everything that a boy, who was also the minister's son, would do in the country. He built dams in the near-by brook, and installed water-wheels that "did all kinds of tricks"; he fished in the big pond; he snared game birds in the woods; and rode around with his father making pastoral calls, the pet of the country-side. All the local conditions were favorable for the boy's precocious and all-round growth. When he was but four years old, he was sent to the near-by district school, coming fortunately under the teaching and guidance of a trained and understanding woman. There he was well grounded in the three "R's," especially in mental arithmetic, and besides, through hearing the older pupils recite, he absorbed a good deal of algebra. Outside school hours he was busy every minute.

On his Grandmother Bowditch's farm

was an unused blacksmith and carpenter shop with all the usual tools, of all which he had the run and use, so that he came to mend and replace, with the help of the hired man, all the gear used on the place. After watching the village blacksmith at his forge, he induced his doting grandmother to let him shoe one of the horses on the farm, and he did a good job. He also made a staunch and roomy row-boat to carry three persons for use in fishing on the pond. That was the day when farmers eked out a scanty livelihood by taking in and finishing shoes from neighboring factories. Bradford, when he was nine years old, by watching a neighbor, learned to turn out for himself a presentable pair of shoes. The growing boy's best friend and mentor in developing his mechanical bent was a neighbor, Captain Jacob Pratt, one of those early Yankee inventors, who had a small shop, with water-power enough to run small saws

and lathes, which he utilized in making "corn-shellers" and "horse-radish grinders." Captain Pratt gave the eager boy the freedom of the shop, taught him the use of the lathe, explained to him the mechanism and construction of the machines he made, and was always ready to help and advise him. Meanwhile, during the farming season, he began to do outdoor work, learning all the routine of the making and gathering of crops and the care and management of domestic animals. All this early training in the shop and on the farm taught the bright and growing boy the valuable lesson which he never forgot, that nothing came to one without a struggle, and that whatever was worth having required work.

When the Civil War broke out, Bradford, being then in his ninth year, was minded to go out as a drummer-boy and laid his plans accordingly. One of the neighbors, Captain Bowen Adams, a vet-

eran drummer of the War of 1812, taught him how to play the drum, and once more Captain Jacob Pratt, his teacher in mechanics, stood him in good stead by lending him a "bell-shaped tent" to play soldier in out of the equipment of a disbanded company of Sherborn militia. He at once raised a company of Sherborn boys and armed and drilled them with wooden muskets. The camp at Readville, not so far away beyond Medway and Dedham, was a great attraction to the boy soldiers, and Bradford with his usual alertness took advantage of this by hiring a horse and wagon and taking the boys to and fro at a fare which yielded him a profit on the venture. Bradford himself would stay at the camp for days at a time, hoping against hope for a chance to go out, drawing his rations with his enlisted friends as a prospective drummer-boy, but there his Civil War experience ended.

On reaching his eleventh or twelfth

year, Bradford's schooling was divided between the Dowse High School for the four months it was open, and, for the rest of the school year, the Natick High School, trudging the three miles to and from the neighboring town, morning and night, in all sorts of weather. In the Dowse High School, as he was the only boy fitting for college, he had the rare advantage of the individual teaching and comradeship of Charles Ware Park, the master. Park was a good teacher and a fine young man, who afterwards graduated from Amherst and Andover, and became a missionary, dying, unfortunately, in his early prime. Besides the usual studies, Park gave Bradford his start in chemistry, making between them the apparatus needed for experiments, including, wonderful to tell, sufficiently accurate scales for ordinary purposes. When Park would give popular lectures in chemistry, electricity and magnetism as then known, the

boy pupil was his proud and efficient helper. This chemical apparatus fell later to Bradford, and was used by him in private experiments in his room at Harvard.

The Reverend Dr. Dowse intended to send his son to Amherst College, his own Alma Mater, although this would involve rigid economy on the part of both father and son. In furtherance of this plan, Bradford, in the autumn of 1867, being then fifteen years of age, was sent by his father to finish fitting for college to the well-known Allen English and Classical School in West Newton. While there he still lived at home in Sherborn, walking the same three miles to and from Natick and going by rail the rest of the way. Soon after he entered the Allen School, the head of the classical department withdrew and formed a new school, taking most of the pupils other than Bradford with him. Then Joseph L. Sanborn, "the best Greek

scholar ever turned out at Harvard College" up to that time, according to Prof. William W. Goodwin, and fresh from a year's experience in the Plymouth High School, became the head of that department and practically Bradford's private tutor. Under Sanborn's influence, the boy was encouraged to try to gain admission to Harvard College rather than to Amherst, something that involved extra and intensive work on the part of the pupil and extra time as well as teaching on the part of Sanborn. The result was that in the early summer of 1869, Bradford tried and passed the entrance examinations so successfully at Cambridge that the college authorities promised him the remunerative post of parietal freshman, assuring him free tuition, with a well-placed room in the college yard, besides a substantial sum of money. He then went back to Sherborn to break the unwelcome news of his change

of purpose to his father. Dr. Dowse was greatly shocked and disappointed and told him he would as soon send him to hell as to Harvard College, a sentiment shared at that period by many orthodox families in New England who felt that "from a religious point of view no young man was safe" in that liberal institution of learning. When, however, the father was told that the son proposed to pay his own way and thus relieve him of all expense, that he had successfully passed the severe entrance examinations to Harvard, and further, and most important, that his boy had already made the acquaintance of Reverend Dr. Andrew P. Peabody, Acting President of the college, whom "he thought to be a good man," the anxious father decided to take the risk, and young Dowse entered Harvard with the Class of 1873.

As parietal freshman, of which venerable guild he was to be the last, it was

his duty to convey to offenders against the college code the admonitions of the Parietal Committee, made up of the Dean and other officials resident within the college walls. Upon entering upon those duties he was duly assigned the room promised him in the yard, and found no difficulty in inducing a classmate to furnish it for the sake of sharing it with him. He was thus comfortably housed, his tuition was taken care of, and the Chairman of the Parietal Committee, whose fag and protégé he was, saw to it that he had as much tutoring of "lame ducks" as would, with his fees as parietal freshman, more than take care, as will be seen, of his other necessary expenses.

Young Dowse spent six busy and productive years in Cambridge, and frugal and amazingly industrious years they were. His college work and his tutoring went hand in hand and neither was neg-

lected. Fifteen hours in term time made up the day's work, and the freedom from college routine in vacation time brought no respite to him from the grind as a private tutor. Frugality was his watchword and became to some extent in small matters a lifelong habit. It is told of him that in returning some books to the college library his act in saving the string and wrapping paper caught the eye and elicited the interest of old Sibley, the librarian, and resulted in the careful student's being accorded privileges beyond the ordinary.

Early in his college career, with the forethought and initiative that had characterized him from boyhood, he decided upon the law as a profession, and with his proficiency in chemistry and the mechanical talent which was his, to become a patent lawyer. During his freshman and sophomore years, he pursued the old-fashioned curriculum of Latin, Greek,

mathematics and history, but during his junior and senior years, under the lure of the elective system brought in by President Eliot, he took other courses which he fancied would advance him in the profession chosen. At the end of a busy and successful career and with a vast experience with men and affairs, he was to reach the reasoned conclusion that a young man during the college period should not pursue vocational studies leading to his life-work, but only those calculated to train his powers and to teach him to think, and that there was "no better way to do this than to keep to the old course of study, Greek, Latin, mathematics and history, with some modern language mastered to the extent of speaking and writing it easily."

He graduated from Harvard College in the Class of 1873 with the respect of his classmates and the regard of the faculty, more than one of whom urged him

to become a teacher. Prof. Josiah P. Cook, Jr., the head of the department of chemistry, vouched for him "as a young gentleman of high character and noble aims" and urged him to devote himself to that rapidly developing and practical branch of learning, chemistry, in which he "had passed all his examinations with marked distinction."

Resisting all persuasion to do otherwise, he remained at Cambridge, was appointed a proctor in the college, took a graduate course of a year in Roman history and philosophy, and at the same time entered upon the study of the law in the Harvard Law School, pursuing all the while his avocation of fitting boys for or assisting them in college.

In 1875, after graduating from the Harvard Law School with the degree of LL.B., he was admitted to the bar and opened a law office in Boston. With his accustomed prudence, however, he did

not give up for another year his duties as a proctor in the college nor his private tutoring, for which he was well paid by the ambitious parents of backward boys. He had worked his way through college and professional school, and whereas he had entered college practically penniless, he had emerged from the Law School with all expenses paid, owing no man a dollar, and with a substantial sum to his credit in the bank. Bent still upon becoming a patent lawyer, conscious as he was of his peculiar aptitude for success in that growing branch of the Federal law, yet he knew few, if any, patent lawyers except by reputation, or counted among his limited circle of friends any prospective clients who were manufacturers of patented articles. The way in which he solved this dual problem of bringing himself into touch with patent specialists and of gaining clients was ingenious and was effective.

From a survey of the field of patent litigation, he easily came to the conclusion that it would be next to impossible for him to build up a patent practice in Boston; that the real field for him to cultivate was New York, where the great number of cases involving the validity of patents originated and were tried, and where in consequence there was a strong patent bar; and further, that the wise thing for him to do was to seek a connection with the office of some eminent practitioner in that city, in which he could learn how experienced lawyers prepared and conducted their cases under the procedure of the Federal Courts.

When early in his legal career, by great good fortune and through the kindness of friends, two small cases were put into his hands at about the same time, involving, one of them, the barbed-wire and the other, the meat refrigeration patents, he at once, to carry out his plan of cam-

paign, went over to New York to see George Harding of that city and Philadelphia, perhaps the most eminent patent lawyer of his day, and induced him to act as senior counsel, and, what was the crucial point, to leave the local management of the two cases in the hands of the younger man. This arrangement gave him when in New York the use of Mr. Harding's office and brought him into frequent contact with that lawyer's numerous and profitable clients. The result was that in a few years Mr. Dowse came to know well, and they knew him, and quite legitimately, hundreds of manufacturers all over the country, who came to New York from time to time to look after their patent cases in Mr. Harding's hands.

It was not long before the young lawyer's native shrewdness, his enormous capacity for work, his inventive genius, his mechanical insight, his chemical knowl-

edge, his growing familiarity with the law of patents and patent procedure, brought a measure of success and a growing clientage. The life of a patent lawyer in full practice is a laborious one, involving, as it does, long absences from home, interminable railway travel, sleepless nights and busy days. It was no exception for him to work from twenty-four to forty-eight hours on a stretch without sleep to prepare a defense and prevent the issue of an injunction, which issue might result in "irreparable injury" to his client. To quote his own words, he "worked like a horse" in those thrilling days of industrial expansion due to inventive genius and a growing country. The barbed-wire litigation alone and that of meat refrigeration, his earliest contacts with the law of patents, kept him busy for many years. The life on the frontier, as the advancing settler pushed his way westward, using barbed wire to enclose his homestead, ir-

respective of patent rights, was not without its thrills even to a patent lawyer. Mr. Dowse in the peaceful pursuit of evidence of priority of use in some patented article was chased out of towns in Missouri and Texas by farmers armed with pitchforks and spading forks because they thought he was there in the interest of the barbed-wire monopoly.

By 1880 Mr. Dowse had come to know and to be retained by very many of the heads of big concerns in the country, interested in patented articles and processes, including Cyrus McCormick of reaper fame, and the packers of Chicago and elsewhere, including the Swifts and the Armours. In 1882 he was admitted to practice in the United States Supreme Court, at that time the court of last resort in all patent cases, and fought many such cases before that august tribunal to a successful conclusion.

When in the course of his practice a

case came to him involving a crude "snap-fastener," the long anticipated opportunity was afforded him of becoming the owner as well as the defender of patents, and thus a captain of industry as well as a leader of the patent bar. Ever since he began to practice law, he had been on the lookout, with an eye to business, for some simple article calculated to meet some long-felt want and thus to come into universal use. Very early in his patent experience, he became interested in devices to take the place of buttons and buttonholes in fastening together the overlapping edges of leathers or fabrics, made into gloves, garments, and, later, automobile curtains and the like. Such a substitute, metallic, capable of mass production, low-priced, would meet a widespread demand and result in a very profitable business. The crude fastener first brought to Mr. Dowse's notice seemed to offer promise of being at least the germ

of the long-sought appliance, though it was to receive much of refinement at the hands of himself and others before it was to become the effective "snap-fastener" now in common use.

The story of how Mr. Dowse came to own a basic patent on the "snap-fastener" reflected credit on his native shrewdness and his ingrained sense of fair dealing. He had carried the case involving the validity of the patent successfully more than once through the United States Supreme Court. The last time, he did this at his own expense and without payment of his fees, his client's resources being exhausted. After trying once more, at Mr. Dowse's suggestion, to raise the money needed to repay him for fees and advances, the client, who was completely at the lawyer's mercy, sold the patent to him, at a price mutually and without pressure agreed upon. Papers were drawn covering the transaction, provid-

ing among other things that the net purchase price, over and above the sum due Mr. Dowse, should be paid to the client in instalments covering a period of years. These papers when signed were deposited in escrow with a trust company in Boston, and it was not until the final instalment was paid to the client that the sale was completed and title to the patent passed to Mr. Dowse.

Finally the "snap-fastener" of world-wide use, invented in part by himself, emerged from a great variety of forms, patents for which had been taken out here and abroad, and which he was obliged to buy for control and to put an end to litigation. He thereupon organized the United States Fastener Company, owned and successfully managed by him, with branches in Grenoble, France, and in Chemnitz, Germany, for the mass production of this convenience of modern life, this universal time-saver, used in a

myriad ways but chiefly upon gloves and other forms of wearing apparel.

Later, in 1898, Mr. Dowse took another step, marking still further his withdrawal from the active practice of the law and his progress towards becoming a captain of industry. In the steps which led to his creating the fastener business, he had become familiar with working in metals, and it was not entirely a new departure when he was called upon to engage in the making of silverware. Reed and Barton, pioneer silver manufacturers, of which Henry G. Reed, a man of force and brains, was the founder, had begun in a small way, as early as 1824, the working of silver in Taunton, Massachusetts. Mr. Reed continued his connection with the expanding business until his death at the advanced age of ninety-one years. Mr. Dowse, who had married Fanny Lee Reed, a daughter of Mr. Reed, on June 20, 1883, was constrained, when Mr. Reed

began to feel the weight of years, to come to his assistance in 1898, and two years later, in succession to him, assumed the office of president of the company. In so doing, he abandoned definitely the law and gave up a practice, the income from which had run into six figures for several years. He continued to hold the position of president, as the business grew and prospered under his able direction, until his own death.

Mr. Dowse never ran for or held public office, but, as a staunch Republican and high protectionist, a manufacturer and owner of patents—a patent is but a form of limited protection—became an ardent member of the Home Market Club, formed to safeguard New England industries, and made up largely of the manufacturers of that section; and served for eleven years as its president.

The close attachment of Mr. Dowse for his native town of Sherborn showed

itself in many ways. When, after his marriage, he was in a position to settle upon a home site, he chose a tract of high land of some forty acres in West Newton, just nine miles from the parsonage in Sherborn, still the home of his father, and nine miles from his office in Boston. Here he built a sightly and comfortable home in a grove of virgin pine, and here, among his flowers and in riding about the adjacent country, he enjoyed a measure of relaxation from the cares and worries of his various business enterprises. With a summer house by the sea at Wianno, a farm in Rehoboth and a winter residence in Boston, he always retained his legal domicile in Sherborn.

Almost from the time he left college, Mr. Dowse, in spite of all the hard gruelling work he did, led a happy, breezy and athletic life. From boyhood he was interested in everything out-of-doors, and when he had reached that degree of suc-

cess at the Bar and in business that enabled him to indulge again this passion, besides riding and yachting he projected various Country Clubs, and followed up playing the game of golf by the laying out and building of golf courses. He assisted or was the driving force behind the construction of links at the Seapuit Club at Osterville, Mass., whose "course of nine holes," he claimed, "was the first fully completed in the United States," at the Braeburn Country Club, near his home in Newton, which has grown into one of the outstanding clubs and links in the country, and at the Wianno Club, also in Osterville, Cape Cod.

In 1914 he built and gave to the town of Sherborn the "Dowse Library," in memory of his father and mother. At the dedicatory exercises on June 10, 1914, to mark the one hundredth anniversary of his father's birth, which occurred on September 7, 1813, in formally presenting

the building, Mr. Dowse said in closing: "It is my wish that the library building be constantly open as a centre of education and sociability. I request that the trustees allow the Sherborn Historical Society the use of the library hall, and that they also offer the hall freely to the townspeople for all social purposes."

In the little old graveyard in Sherborn, beside the road and near the Pilgrim Church and parsonage, Mr. Dowse erected in 1924 a fitting and unusual memorial to the men of the town who had served in all the wars in defense of their section and country since the beginnings of New England. These wars were the French and Indian Wars, the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish War and the World War. The finely proportioned and appropriate base with platform and canopy of New England granite was designed by the well-known

architect, William B. Dinsmore. On the lower part appears the inscription: "In memory of the men of Sherborn who gave their lives in defense of their Country." The central feature of the Memorial is a bronze statue by Cyrus E. Dallin, and shows "a woman with a downcast face in an attitude of thoughtful remembrance" bearing upon her arm a "trench hat," wreathed with laurel. On either side of the statue are bronze tablets bearing the names of the "honored dead of the Wars from 1676 to 1918"; and above the seat at the rear are two further tablets, one bearing the names of the donor's ancestors who so served, and the second the inscription: "This Memorial is erected and presented to the town of Sherborn—his birthplace—by William Bradford Homer Dowse." In his address at the dedicatory exercises, the donor said: "Out of gratitude to all these men I have caused to be erected this Memo-

rial and the bronze statue of 'Memory,' which I now present, with the affection of a child for its mother, to the town of Sherborn, with the sincere hope that it will incite in the hearts of youth an even greater love for their parents and forbears and a greater love, veneration and respect for the men who have fought for their Country in times of peril."

He was a great traveller all his life. No sooner was he out of college and the Law School, and scarcely started in the practice of law, than he began to reap the advantages of his toil and economies. In 1878 the opportunity came to him of going abroad with his friend, Charles H. Breck, of the well-known firm of seedsmen, Joseph H. Breck & Sons, in the old, single screw steamship, *City of Berlin*, and with whom he was the recipient of much genial hospitality from seed merchants and bulb growers in England and Holland. After that initial trip he trav-

elled far and wide with his wife and children over Egypt and Europe, with every part of which latter he was familiar, on foot, by boat, by train and by automobile.

One of the pleasant episodes of Mr. Dowse's busy life was his representing the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in England and Holland at the tercentenary celebrations, held at Leyden and Plymouth respectively in 1920, of the departure from each of those historic places of the Pilgrims in 1620. He was at the time Governor of the Massachusetts Society of Mayflower Descendants, which office he held for several years, as well as that of Deputy Governor General of the National Society, membership in which came to him from his maternal ancestor, John Alden. By a commission formally issued in May, 1920, under the Great Seal of the Commonwealth, he was appointed Deputy Governor to represent

the Governor on those memorable occasions. Accompanied by his daughter, Margaret, he was the guest at Leyden in August, 1920, of Burgomaster Gijselaar, while the festivities were in progress in Holland in honor of the event, during which they were presented to Queen Wilhelmina. For a week or more in the September following, the historic departure thence of the Mayflower Company was celebrated at Plymouth, when, at the imposing banquet in honor of the event, Governor Dowse responded fittingly to the toast "The King," proposed by Lord Reading, the Lord Chief Justice.

On February 14, 1918, Mr. Dowse was elected a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Of all the varied activities and associations of his life, it was in his membership in this famous body, with which the name of Dowse had been so long and honorably associated through the donation of his great-

uncle, Thomas, that he took the greatest pride and satisfaction. He served as a member of the Council from April, 1919, to April, 1922, at the annual meeting, in which month he made the report of the Council to the Society. He was a member of the House Committee from May, 1927, until his death. In December, 1926, he presented an oil portrait of himself, painted by Herman Hanatschek, to the Society, which, it may be hoped, will one day be hung in the Dowse Library. At the May meeting of 1920, he presented to the Society a copy of *Gradus ad Parnassum* used at Harvard College by John Lowell, giving at the same time an account of early associations with the Lowell family and of his own appreciation of work at college. Soon after he became a member and had joined in a meeting of the Society, held as usual in the Dowse Library, an opportunity to emulate his relative's example by a gift

to the Society presented itself, which he was not slow to embrace. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts did not possess a complete set from the beginning of its existence as the Massachusetts Bay Colony and Province of its legislative records. The original manuscripts of the House Journals had been burned or lost through various mischances. These Journals, from 1714 to 1770, had been printed, from time to time, in limited editions, but the State did not possess copies of some of them in its own archives. The missing copies were scattered among various owners in different states. The new member heard of this situation, and actuated by the triple motive of serving his native State, benefiting the Society and showing his own appreciation of the honor of membership, made it possible by a gift of money to enter upon their publication. Annually, for several years, there has appeared a volume, a reprint

of the original but in more convenient form, of these valuable historical volumes. The assurance of an annual volume for all the future and until the list is complete places the undertaking among the most important of those attempted by the friends of historical research.

He is survived by his widow and by his three daughters, Dorothy Pino, who married Franklin Delano Putnam, Margaret, and Beatrice, who married Charles Sinclair Weeks.

In a tribute paid to the memory of Mr. Dowse, at the first meeting of the Society after his death, Worthington Chauncey Ford, Editor of the Society, and an intimate friend of his, said of him: "Aside from his success at the Bar and in industrial undertakings, Mr. Dowse had another side to his character which attracted me. He kept up his reading and retained an interest in public affairs. He had sentiment and fore-

sight. Whatever he touched took on a new shape and to every detail he gave his personal attention. His widely divided activities were due to his vision and reacted to its increase. With his successes, and they were many, Mr. Dowse retained a certain simplicity that was engaging. Back of that form of shyness rather than of diffidence lay an ability to look at everything from the large point of view. Many and engrossing as were his ventures, he found time for outdoor sports — riding, rose-culture and golf — and for social enjoyment. Generous in his gifts to a large number of private and public activities, he has given to this Society what will be a permanent reminder of his interest in it and in the history of the Commonwealth."

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